

Validity and Reliability

Definitions

A survey item is *valid* if it accurately measures the concept it is intended to measure.

A survey item is *reliable* if it consistently produces the same results under the same circumstances.

How Valid and Reliable is the Healthy Youth Survey

Nearly all the questions asked as part of the Healthy Youth Survey 2002 were gleaned from four established surveys that have been used throughout the United States, some for more than 25 years. Each of these surveys has been subjected to scientific research regarding reliability and validity and has been field-tested extensively. This field testing generally addresses issues such as the content and structure of questions, the ordering of questions, the types and ordering of response options, and survey length. In addition, a pilot version of Washington's Healthy Youth Survey was field-tested during the fall of 2001. Information from this effort was used to refine and improve the survey.

Information about the four contributing surveys is detailed below. General information about the science of surveying can be found at <http://www.isr.umich.edu/src/>.

Survey Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)

Developed by Centers for Disease Control

For more information <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>

Notes Administered in some form in nearly every state on a biennial basis.

Survey Communities that Care

Developed by Social Development Research Group, University of Washington

For more information <http://depts.washington.edu/sdrg/>
<http://depts.washington.edu/sdrg/SDRG%20Pubs/DiffF.html>

Survey Global Youth Tobacco Survey

Developed by Centers for Disease Control

For more information <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/index.htm>
<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/global/GYTS.htm>

Survey Monitoring the Future

Developed by Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

For more information <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/>

Notes Administered to a national sample of respondents each year since 1975.